



Justice of the Peace Courts

Trinity County, Texas

RULES OF JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 These rules are promulgated pursuant to Section 27.061 of the Texas Government Code.
- 1.2 The objective of these rules is to provide for the fair, impartial and prompt disposition of matters before the justice courts of Trinity County, Texas.
- 1.3 Each court may adopt such other rules not in conflict with these rules of administration, Trinity County policy, state laws, or federal laws, as may be deemed necessary by the judge of that court for the efficient administration of justice.
- 1.4 These rules do not supersede statutory requirements, and all justices of the peace shall follow statutory laws as well as the Code of Judicial Conduct.

2.0 ORGANIZATION

- 2.1 There are four justice of the peace courts in Trinity County. Each court has a specific geographical area of jurisdiction.
- 2.2 Each court has its own court clerks responsible for setting cases on the individual docket of each court.

3.0 HOURS AND PLACES FOR HOLDING COURT

- 3.1 Court shall be held at such times as may be determined expedient by the justice of the peace of each court.
- 3.2 Court shall be held at a courtroom in Trinity County, Texas in each justice of the peace designated court or in a location deemed necessary by the justice of the peace to carry out the responsibilities of the court.
- 3.3 A justice court may allow or require all persons to participate in proceedings remotely, as authorized by statute, rule, or order of the Texas Supreme Court.

4.0 DISPOSITION OF CIVIL CASES

- 4.1 Each justice of the peace should set the docket to ensure civil jury cases are concluded within eighteen (18) months from answer date, and civil non-jury cases

are concluded within twelve (12) months from answer date, subject to a continuance or pass.

5.0 DISMISSAL OF CIVIL CASES

- 5.1 At least once a year, each Court should set appropriate cases on a dismissal docket that have not had any action in the previous 365 days.

6.0 TRANSFER OF CASES AMONG COURTS

6.1 Transfer of Civil Cases

- 6.1.1 In accordance with Section 15.0821 of the Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Administrative Rules for Transfer, the justices of the peace of Trinity County, by majority vote, adopt these rules herein for transfer of a pending civil case from one precinct to another precinct.
- 6.1.2 Any justice of the peace court judge in Trinity County, Texas, may act as the judge of any other justice of the peace court in Trinity County, Texas.
- 6.1.3 The transfer of cases between the justice of the peace courts of Trinity County, Texas may be done by written order upon consent of the judges of those courts participating in the transfer and will transfer electronically by the software systems used by Trinity County, Texas.
- 6.1.4 Standard procedures for transferring civil cases will be maintained and updated by a justice of the peace designated by majority vote of the justice court judges.

6.2 Transfer of Criminal Cases

- 6.2.1 Pursuant to Article 4.12(3) of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, the justices of the peace of Trinity County, Texas, by majority vote, adopt these rules herein for transfer of a pending criminal case from one precinct to another precinct.
- 6.2.2 Any justice of the peace court judge in Trinity County, Texas, may act as the judge of any other justice of the peace court in Trinity County, Texas.
- 6.2.3 The transfer of cases between the justice of the peace courts of Trinity County, Texas may be done by written order upon consent of the judges of those courts participating in the transfer and will transfer electronically by the software systems used by Trinity County, Texas.
- 6.2.4 Standard procedures for transferring criminal cases will be maintained and updated by a justice of the peace designated by majority vote of the justice of the peace court judges.

7.0 EXCHANGE OF BENCHES

- 7.1 Pursuant to Texas Rules of Civil Procedure Rule 502.4(f), upon agreement, a justice of the peace may exchange benches to hold court and administer justice.

- 7.2 The docket of each case heard by the visiting judge will reflect the visiting judge's name.
- 7.3 The judge requesting the exchange shall initiate the transfer order and ensure it is signed by both judges prior to the adjudication of any cases.

8.0 FAIR VENUE EXCHANGE

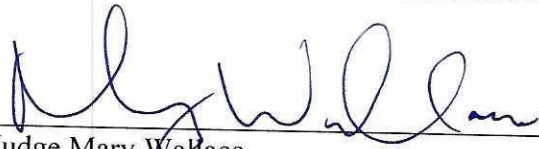
- 8.1 Pursuant to Texas Rules of Civil Procedure Rule 502.4(e), if a party believes it cannot get a fair trial and provides the required documentation to seek a fair venue change, the judge receiving the order will follow the requirements in this rule to secure the appropriate remedy.

- 8.2 The Fair Venue Change order and assignment shall be annotated in the docket.

9.0 EFFECTIVE DATE

- 9.1 These rules of administration are adopted by a majority vote of the Trinity County justices of the peace and become effective beginning May 1, 2026. These rules may be changed by majority vote at any appropriately called meeting.

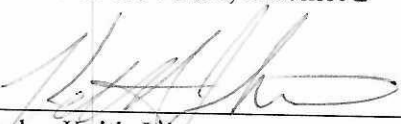
Approved this 24 day of MARCH, 2026.



Judge Mary Wallace
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1



Judge Richard "Ricky" Hortman
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2



Judge Keith Johnson
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 3



Judge Richard Steptoe
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4